

EPA Region 5 – *Partners for Asthma Action Recognition 2007* ***Allen County Asthma Coalition***

Background:

The mission of Allen County Asthma Coalition is to promote change in Allen County community norms regarding asthma through awareness building, policy development, legislative action and advocacy. The coalition is currently in the process of voting on officers and forming subcommittees for the organization. They came together as a group last year to hold the inaugural World Asthma Day celebration in Fort Wayne and are looking to continue this positive trend in future programs and events. There is a definite need in Allen County for education for children with asthma and their families.

Partners:

- Ivy Tech Community College Respiratory Care Program
- PHP Insurance Company
- Signature Care Insurance Company
- Allergy and Asthma Center (Dr. William Smits)
- Heart Center Medical Group
- American Lung Association of IN
- Parkview Hospital
- Lutheran Hospital
- Parkview Hospital Community Asthma Program

Goals:

The coalition is currently focusing on schools and teaching school personnel and students the proper way to better manage asthma in the school setting. A major goal this year is to reach into each of the 4 districts and into a majority of the private schools of the county. Allen County Asthma Coalition hoping to recruit teachers and coaches to receive in-service training on asthma signs and symptoms and how to best care for these children if a severe exacerbation should occur. They would like to provide or participate in at least 2 educational programs directed at the community per year. The Coalition also thinks it is imperative to continue school and school nurse affiliation/education.

Challenges:

One major challenge continues to be consistent participation from organizations and having more people involved with projects and work of group. There is a spectacular core group dedicated to the coalition while others seem to come and go. "This makes it harder to achieve the goals we desire to concentrate on and achieve!"

Key Drivers and Program Areas:

Committed Leaders and Champions:

Allen County has a group of committed individuals that are not only diverse in their background, but all very professional. The core group of 'leaders/champions' are each respected in the field in which they come from. From the school system asthma nurse to the respiratory therapist that performs pulmonary function tests, each of the volunteers bring vital information to the group. The information may be in contacts with venues or other member potential organization to contacts with minority groups that they are able to reach.

Community Ties:

One of the strongest community ties is the fact that the American Lung Association of Indiana has an office in Allen County, and it has been present for decades. Allen County Coalition members come from a wide variety of workplaces. Allen County Asthma Coalition has also ensured representation from both major hospitals and all school systems in the area. It is imperative to the coalition to maintain this diversity, so it is not seen as an 'exclusive' program of a specific hospital or school system.

Collaborations:

Allen County Asthma Coalition is a collaboration of the American Lung Association of Indiana, differing physician's offices, school systems, insurance companies and the local respiratory therapist school. Without such a diverse group of individuals, they would not be able to reach the audiences that they have in the past or hope to in the future.

Integrated Health Care Services:

The Allen County Asthma Coalition earns credibility in the community by using health professionals from both hospital systems in its programming. This has also been helped by holding functions at venues that are credible. The World Asthma Day Celebration last year was held at Science Central, a well-respected hands-on science 'museum' in the community. This not only drew those that were coming specifically to the WAD activities, but they were also able to educate others that were coming just for the day to visit Science Central.

Contact Information:

Program Name: Allen County Asthma Coalition

Managing or Fiduciary Agent: American Lung Association of Indiana

Program Location (Mailing Address): 3454 Stellhorn Road, Suite A
Fort Wayne, IN 46815

Program Coverage (Regional, State, Community): County of Allen

Main Point of Contact (POC): Brett J. Aschliman

POC Phone Number: 260-486-2001

POC E-Mail Address: baschliman@lungin.org